

# Language

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Central Asia is a multilingual area, and so this chapter includes words and phrases from six different languages that you may find useful. The official languages of the former Soviet Central Asian countries are Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Tajik, Turkmen and Uzbek, but Russian is still the language of government and academia (rather like English in India). Therefore the one language most useful for a visitor is still Russian; you'll find that it's the second language for most adults, who were taught it in school. A few words of the local language will nonetheless give a disproportionate return in goodwill. At home, educated people normally speak a mishmash of Russian and their native tongue.

Learning the Russian Cyrillic alphabet is a very good idea, as most of the Cyrillic-based alphabets of Central Asia will then be familiar as well (see The Russian Cyrillic Alphabet on p482 and Non-Russian Cyrillic Letters on p484).

Learning to count in local languages will allow you to listen in on discussions of prices in the markets. In public it's now often worthwhile letting non-Russians know in advance that you're not Russian, either by saying so or by starting out in English.

For a comprehensive guide to Russian, get a copy of Lonely Planet's *Russian Phrasebook*. For an excellent guide to the other languages of Central Asia, get a copy of Lonely Planet's *Central Asia Phrasebook*.

## RUSSIAN

Two words you're sure to use during your travels are *здравствуйте* (*zdrastvuyte*), the

universal 'hello' (but if you say it a second time in one day to the same person, they'll think you forgot you already saw them!), and *пожалуйста* (*pazhalsta*), the multi-purpose word for 'please' (commonly used with all polite requests), 'you're welcome', 'pardon me', 'after you' and more.

The easiest way to turn a statement into a question is just to use a rising tone and a questioning look, or follow it with *da?*, eg 'Is this Moscow?', Это Москва, да? (*eta maskva da?*). A sentence is made negative by putting *ne* (*ni*) before its main word, eg 'This is not Moscow', Это не Москва? (*eta ni maskva*).

Two letters have no sound, but modify others. A consonant followed by the 'soft sign' **ь** is spoken with the tongue flat against the palate, as if followed by the faint beginnings of a 'y'. The rare 'hard sign' **ъ** after a consonant inserts a slight pause before the next vowel.

## Greetings & Civilities

### Hello.

*zdrast-vuy-te* Здравствуйте.

### Goodbye.

*da svi-da-ni-ya* До свидания.

### How are you?

*kak di-la?* Как дела?

### I'm well.

*kha-ra-sho* Хорошо.

### Yes/No.

*da/net* Да/Нет.

### good/OK

*kha-ra-sho* хорошо

### bad

*plo-kha* плохо

### Thank you (very much).

(*bal'sho-ye*) *spa-si-ba* (Большое) Спасибо.

### What's your name?

*kak vas za-vut?* Как вас зовут?

### My name is ...

*mi-nya za-vut ...* Меня зовут ...

### Where are you from?

*at-ku-da vy?* Откуда вы?

### Australia

*af-stra-li-ya* Австралия

### Canada

*ka-na-da* Канада

**France**

*fran-tsi-ya* Франция

**Germany**

*ger-ma-ni-ya* Германия

**Ireland**

*ir-lan-di-ya* Ирландия

**New Zealand**

*no-va-ya ze-lan-di-ya* Новая Зеландия

**the UK (Great Britain)**

*ve-li-ka-bri-ta-ni-ya* Великобритания

**the USA**

*se she a/a-me-ri-ka* США/Америка

**Language Difficulties****I don't speak Russian.**

*ya ni ga-va-ryu pa ru-ski* Я не говорю по-русски.

**I don't understand.**

*ya ni pa-ni-ma-yu* Я не понимаю.

**Do you speak English?**

*vy ga-va-ri-te pa ang-liy-ski?*  
Вы говорите по-английски?

**Could you write it down, please?**

*za-pi-shi-te pa-zhal-sta* Запишите пожалуйста.

**Transport & Travel**

To get off a *marshutnoe* minibus say *astan-avitye pazhalsta*.

**Where is ...?**

*gde ...?* Где ...?

**When does it leave?**

*kag-da at-prav-lya-et-sya?* Когда отправляется?

**What town is this?**

*ka-koy e-ta go-rat?* Какой это город?

**How much is a room?**

*skol'-ka sto-it no-mer?* Сколько стоит номер?

**airport**

*ae-ra-port* аэропорт

**bus**

*af-to-bus* автобус

**hotel**

*gas-ti-ni-tsa* гостиница

**railway station**

*zhi-lez-na da-rozh-nyu vognal* (abbr. ж. д.)  
железнодорожный вокзал

**square/plaza**

*plo-shchat'* площадь (abbr. пл.)

**street**

*u-li-tsa* улица (abbr. ул.)

**toilet**

*tua-let* туалет

**train**

*po-y-ezt* поезд

**THE RUSSIAN CYRILLIC ALPHABET****Cyrillic Roman Pronunciation**

**А, а** **a** as the 'a' in 'father' (in stressed syllable); as the 'a' in 'ago' (in unstressed syllable)

**Б, б** **b** as the 'b' in 'but'

**В, в** **v** as the 'v' in 'van'

**Г, г** **g** as the 'g' in 'god'

**Д, д** **d** as the 'd' in 'dog'

**Е, е \*** **e** as the 'ye' in 'yet' (in stressed syllable); as the 'yi' in 'yin' (in unstressed syllable)

**Ё, ё \*\*** **yo** as the 'yo' in 'yore'

**Ж, ж** **zh** as the 's' in 'measure'

**З, з** **z** as the 'z' in 'zoo'

**И, и** **i** as the 'ee' in 'meet'

**Й, й** **y** as the 'y' in 'boy'

**К, к** **k** as the 'k' in 'kind'

**Л, л** **l** as the 'l' in 'lamp'

**М, м** **m** as the 'm' in 'mad'

**Н, н** **n** as the 'n' in 'not'

**О, о** **o** as the 'o' in 'more' (in stressed syllable); as the 'a' in 'hard' (in unstressed syllable)

**П, п** **p** as the 'p' in 'pig'

**Р, р** **r** as the 'r' in 'rub' (rolled)

**С, с** **s** as the 's' in 'sing'

**Т, т** **t** as the 't' in 'ten'

**У, у** **u** as the 'oo' in 'fool'

**Ф, ф** **f** as the 'f' in 'fan'

**Х, х** **kh** as the 'ch' in 'Bach'

**Ц, ц** **ts** as the 'ts' in 'bits'

**Ч, ч** **ch** as the 'ch' in 'chin'

**Ш, ш** **sh** as the 'sh' in 'shop'

**Щ, щ** **shch** as 'sh-ch' in 'fresh chips'

**Ъ, ъ** **'** 'hard sign' (see p481)

**Ы, ы** **y** as the 'i' in 'ill'

**Ь, ь** **'** 'soft sign'; (see p481)

**Э, э** **e** as the 'e' in 'end'

**Ю, ю** **yu** as the 'u' in 'use'

**Я, я** **ya** as the 'ya' in 'yard' (in stressed syllable); as the 'ye' in 'yearn' (in unstressed syllable)

\* **E, e** are transliterated *ye* when at the beginning of a word

\*\* **Ё, ё** are often printed without dots

**Money & Shopping****How much is it?**

*skol'ka sto-it?* Сколько стоит?

**Do you have ...?**

*u vas est' ...?* У вас есть ...?

**bookshop**

*knizh-nyy ma-ga-zin* книжный магазин

**currency exchange**

*ab-men val-yu-ty* обмен валюты

**Emergencies – Russian****I need a doctor.**

*mne nu-zhin vrach* Мне нужен врач.

**hospital**

*bal'ni-tsa* больница

**police**

*mi-li-tsi-ya* милиция

**Fire!**

*pa-zhar!* Пожар!

**Help!**

*na po-mashch'!* На помощь!/

*pa-ma-gi-til!* Помогите!

**Thief!**

*vor!* Вор!

**market**

*ry-nak* рынок

**money**

*den'gi* деньги

**pharmacy**

*ap-te-ka* аптека

**shop**

*ma-ga-zin* магазин

**Time & Days**

Dates are given as day-month-year, with the month usually in Roman numerals. Days of the week are often represented by numbers in timetables; Monday is 1.

**When?**

*kag-da?* Когда?

**today** *si-vod-nya* сегодня

**yesterday** *vchi-ra* вчера

**tomorrow** *zaf-tra* завтра

**Monday**

*pa-ni-del'nik* понедельник

*ftor-nik* вторник

*sri-da* среда

*chit-verk* четверг

*pyat-ni-tsa* пятница

*su-bo-ta* суббота

**Sunday** *vas-kri-sen'e* воскресенье

**Numbers**

**How many?** *skol'ka?* Сколько?

**0** *nol'* ноль

**1** *a-din* один

**2** *dva* два

**3** *tri* три

**4** *chi-ty-ri* четыре

**5** *pyat'* пять

**6** *shest'* шесть

7	<i>sem'</i>	семь
8	<i>vo-sim'</i>	восемь
9	<i>de-vit'</i>	девять
10	<i>de-sit'</i>	десять
20	<i>dva-tsat'</i>	двадцать
30	<i>tri-tsat'</i>	тридцать
40	<i>so-rak</i>	сорок
50	<i>pyat-di-syat</i>	пятьдесят
60	<i>shest-di-syat</i>	шестьдесят
70	<i>sem-di-syat</i>	семьдесят
80	<i>vo-sim-di-syat</i>	восемьдесят
90	<i>di-vya-no-sta</i>	девяносто
100	<i>sto</i>	сто
1000	<i>ty-sya-cha</i>	тысяча

**KAZAKH**

Kazakh is a Turkic language. Since 1940 it has been written in a 42-letter version of the Cyrillic alphabet (see p482 and p484). At least as many people in Kazakhstan speak Russian as Kazakh. Any political tension over language issues has been rather neatly sidestepped by making Kazakh the official state language, but permitting the predominant language in local regions to be used in written government business, and giving Russian national language status as 'language of interethnic communication'.

Russian is the first language for some urban Kazakhs as well as the large Russian minority who form about 35% of the population. Few people speak English or other Western languages, but many of those who do tend to work in the tourist industry or with foreigners.

Street signs are sometimes in Kazakh, sometimes in Russian, sometimes in both. In this book we use the language you're most likely to come across in each town.

**Kazakh Basics**

**Peace be with you.** *assalamu aleykum*  
**And peace with you.** *waghaleykum ussalam*  
(response)

**Hello.** *salamatsyz be*

**Goodbye.** *qosh-sau bolyngdar*

**Thank you.** *rakhmet*

**Yes/No.** *ia/zhoq*

**How are you?** *khal zhagh dayyngyz qalay?*

**I'm well.** *zhaqsy*

**Do you speak English?** *aghylshynsa bilesiz be?*

**I don't understand.** *tusinbeymin*

**Where is...?** *... qayda?*

**How much?** *qansha?*

## NON-RUSSIAN CYRILLIC LETTERS

## Cyrillic Roman Pronunciation

Cyrillic	Roman	Pronunciation
<b>Kazakh</b>		
Ә, ә	a	as the 'a' in 'man'
Ғ, ғ	gh	as the 'gh' in 'ugh'
Қ, қ	q	a guttural 'k'
Ң, ң	n	as the 'ng' in 'sing'
Ө, ө	ö	as the 'u' in 'fur'
Ү, ү	u	as the 'u' in 'full'
Ү, ү	ü	as the 'oo' in 'fool'
Һ, һ	h	as the 'h' in 'hat'
І, і	i	as the 'i' in 'ill'
<b>Tajik</b>		
Ғ, ғ	gh	as the 'gh' in 'ugh'
Ӣ, ӣ	ee	as the 'ee' in 'fee'
Қ, қ	q	as the 'k' in 'keen'
Ү, ү	ö	as the 'u' in 'fur'
Х, х	kh	as the 'h' in 'hat'
Ҷ, ҷ	j	as 'j' in 'jig'
<b>Uzbek</b>		
Ғ, ғ	gh	as the 'gh' in 'ugh'
Қ, қ	q	a guttural 'k'
Ү, ү	u	as the 'oo' in 'book'
Х, х	kh	as the 'ch' in 'Bach'
<b>Kyrgyz</b>		
Ң, ң	ng	as the 'ng' in 'sing'
Ө, ө	ö	as the 'u' in 'fur'
Ү, ү	ü	as the 'ew' in 'few'

<b>airport</b>	<i>aeroport</i>
<b>bus station</b>	<i>avtobus vokzal</i>
<b>doctor</b>	<i>dariger</i>
<b>friend</b>	<i>dos</i>
<b>hospital</b>	<i>aurukhana</i>
<b>hotel</b>	<i>qonaq uy/meymankhana</i>
<b>police</b>	<i>millitsia</i>
<b>restaurant</b>	<i>restoran</i>
<b>toilet</b>	<i>azhetkhana</i>
<b>train station</b>	<i>temir zhol vokzal</i>

<b>bad</b>	<i>zhaman</i>
<b>boiled water</b>	<i>qaynaghan su</i>
<b>bread</b>	<i>nan</i>
<b>expensive</b>	<i>qymbat</i>
<b>good</b>	<i>zhaqsy</i>
<b>meat</b>	<i>yet</i>
<b>rice</b>	<i>kurish</i>
<b>tea</b>	<i>shay</i>

<b>Monday</b>	<i>duysenbi</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>seysenbi</i>

<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>sarsenbi</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>beysenbi</i>
<b>Friday</b>	<i>zhuma</i>
<b>Saturday</b>	<i>senbi</i>
<b>Sunday</b>	<i>zheksenbi</i>

<b>1</b>	<i>bir</i>
<b>2</b>	<i>yeki</i>
<b>3</b>	<i>ush</i>
<b>4</b>	<i>tört</i>
<b>5</b>	<i>bes</i>
<b>6</b>	<i>alty</i>
<b>7</b>	<i>etti</i>
<b>8</b>	<i>sakkiz</i>
<b>9</b>	<i>toghyz</i>
<b>10</b>	<i>zhus</i>
<b>100</b>	<i>zhus</i>
<b>1000</b>	<i>myng</i>

## KYRGYZ

Kyrgyz is a Turkic language that has been written using a Cyrillic script since the early 1940s (see p482 and the boxed text opposite). Along with neighbouring countries Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan is in the process of changing over to a modified Roman alphabet. While international Roman letters have already been adopted for vehicle number plates, Kyrgyzstan is the slowest of these three countries in implementing the change from a Cyrillic to a Roman alphabet.

In 2000 the government afforded Russian official-language status, but there is currently also a strong push to promote Kyrgyz as the predominant language of government, media and education. It's a move not without its detractors, who see it as a politically motivated means of discriminating against non-Kyrgyz-speaking minorities.

## Kyrgyz Basics

<b>Peace be with you.</b>	<i>assalamu aleykom</i>
<b>And peace with you.</b>	<i>wa aleykom assalam</i>
(response)	
<b>Hello.</b>	<i>salam</i>
<b>Goodbye.</b>	<i>jakshy kalyngydzar</i>
<b>Thank you.</b>	<i>rakhmat</i>
<b>Yes/No.</b>	<i>ooba/jok</i>
<b>How are you?</b>	<i>jakshysüzbü?</i>
<b>I'm well.</b>	<i>jakshy</i>
<b>Do you speak English?</b>	<i>siz anglischa süylöy süzbü?</i>
<b>I don't understand.</b>	<i>men tüshümböy jatamyn</i>
<b>Where is ...?</b>	<i>... kayda?</i>
<b>How much?</b>	<i>kancha?</i>

<b>airport</b>	<i>aeroport</i>
<b>bus station</b>	<i>avtobiket</i>
<b>doctor</b>	<i>doktur</i>
<b>friend</b>	<i>dos</i>
<b>hospital</b>	<i>oruukana</i>
<b>hotel</b>	<i>meymankana</i>
<b>police</b>	<i>millitsia</i>
<b>restaurant</b>	<i>restoran</i>
<b>toilet</b>	<i>darakana</i>
<b>train station</b>	<i>temir jol vokzal</i>

<b>bad</b>	<i>jaman</i>
<b>boiled water</b>	<i>kaynatilgan suu</i>
<b>bread</b>	<i>nan</i>
<b>expensive</b>	<i>kymbat</i>
<b>good</b>	<i>jakshy</i>
<b>meat</b>	<i>et</i>
<b>rice</b>	<i>kürüch</i>
<b>tea</b>	<i>chay</i>

<b>Monday</b>	<i>düshömbü</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>seyshembi</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>sharshembi</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>beishembi</i>
<b>Friday</b>	<i>juma</i>
<b>Saturday</b>	<i>ishembi</i>
<b>Sunday</b>	<i>jekshembi</i>

<b>1</b>	<i>bir</i>
<b>2</b>	<i>eki</i>
<b>3</b>	<i>üch</i>
<b>4</b>	<i>tört</i>
<b>5</b>	<i>bes</i>
<b>6</b>	<i>alty</i>
<b>7</b>	<i>jety</i>
<b>8</b>	<i>segiz</i>
<b>9</b>	<i>toguz</i>
<b>10</b>	<i>on</i>
<b>100</b>	<i>jüz</i>
<b>1000</b>	<i>ming</i>

## TAJIK

Tajik, the state language of Tajikistan since 1989, belongs to the southwest Persian group of languages and is closely related to Dari (the principal language of Afghanistan) and Farsi (the language of Iran). This sets it apart from all the other Central Asian languages which are Turkic in origin. Tajik was formerly written in a modified Arabic script (similar to the Farsi alphabet) and then in Roman, but since 1940 a modified Cyrillic script has been used (see p482 and p484).

In Dushanbe most people speak Tajik and Russian. Uzbek is also spoken by a significant percentage of the population.

## Tajik Basics

<b>Peace be with you.</b>	<i>assalamu aleykom</i>
<b>And peace with you.</b>	<i>valeykom assalam</i>
(response)	
<b>Hello.</b>	<i>salom</i>
<b>Goodbye.</b>	<i>khayr naboshad</i>
<b>Thank you.</b>	<i>rakhmat/teshakkur</i>
<b>Yes/No.</b>	<i>kha/ne</i>
<b>How are you?</b>	<i>naghzmi shum?</i>
<b>I'm well.</b>	<i>mannaghz</i>
<b>Do you speak English?</b>	<i>anglisi meydonet?</i>
<b>I don't understand.</b>	<i>man manefakhmam</i>
<b>Where is ...?</b>	<i>... khujo ast?</i>
<b>How much?</b>	<i>chand pul?</i>

<b>airport</b>	<i>furudgoh</i>
<b>bus station</b>	<i>istgoh</i>
<b>doctor</b>	<i>duhtur</i>
<b>friend</b>	<i>doost</i>
<b>hospital</b>	<i>bemorhona/kasalhona</i>
<b>hotel</b>	<i>mekhmon'hona</i>
<b>police</b>	<i>millitsia</i>
<b>restaurant</b>	<i>restoran</i>
<b>toilet</b>	<i>khajat'hona</i>
<b>train station</b>	<i>istgoh rohi ohan</i>

<b>bad</b>	<i>ganda</i>
<b>boiled water</b>	<i>obi jush</i>
<b>bread</b>	<i>non</i>
<b>expensive</b>	<i>qimmat</i>
<b>good</b>	<i>khub/naghz</i>
<b>meat</b>	<i>gusht</i>
<b>rice</b>	<i>birinj</i>
<b>tea</b>	<i>choy</i>

<b>Monday</b>	<i>dushanbe</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>seshanbe</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>chorshanbe</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>panjanbe</i>
<b>Friday</b>	<i>juma</i>
<b>Saturday</b>	<i>shanbe</i>
<b>Sunday</b>	<i>yakshanbe</i>

<b>1</b>	<i>yak</i>
<b>2</b>	<i>du</i>
<b>3</b>	<i>seh</i>
<b>4</b>	<i>chor</i>
<b>5</b>	<i>panj</i>
<b>6</b>	<i>shish</i>
<b>7</b>	<i>khaft</i>
<b>8</b>	<i>khast</i>

9	<i>nukh</i>
10	<i>dakh</i>
100	<i>sad</i>
1000	<i>khazor</i>

## TURKMEN

Turkmen, the state language of Turkmenistan since 1990, has been described as '800-year-old Turkish'. It belongs to the Turkic language family, forming part of the south-western group together with the Turkish and Azeri (spoken in Azerbaijan). In Turkmenistan virtually everyone speaks Russian and Turkmen (except for Russians, who speak Russian only). English speakers are generally only found in the tourist industry and at some universities.

There's been a significant infiltration of Russian words and phrases into Turkmen, especially in this century (particularly words to do with science and technology). Turkmen conversation is punctuated with Russian, to the extent that sentences may begin in Turkmen, then slip into Russian midway through.

Three different scripts have been used to write Turkmen; Arabic, Roman and Cyrillic. Arabic was the first, though little Turkmen was ever written in it (there's a popular style of calligraphy, often used on monuments, in which Cyrillic script is rendered in such a way that it almost resembles Arabic script). A modified Turkish-Roman alphabet was used until 1940 when the Cyrillic alphabet took over. On 1 January 1996, Turkmen Cyrillic was officially replaced by another modified Roman alphabet called Elipbi, and the changeover to this is complete.

## Turkmen Basics

<b>Peace be with you.</b>	<i>salam aleykum</i>
<b>And peace with you.</b>	<i>waleykum assalam</i>
(response)	
<b>Hello.</b>	<i>salam</i>
<b>Goodbye.</b>	<i>sagh bol</i>
<b>Thank you.</b>	<i>tangyr</i>
<b>Yes/No.</b>	<i>howa/yok</i>
<b>How are you?</b>	<i>siz nahili?</i>
<b>Fine, and you?</b>	<i>onat, a siz?</i>
<b>I don't understand.</b>	<i>men dushenamok</i>
<b>Do you speak English?</b>	<i>siz inglische gepleyarsinizmi?</i>
<b>Where is ...?</b>	<i>... niredeh?</i>
<b>How much?</b>	<i>nyacheh?</i>
<b>airport</b>	<i>aeroport</i>
<b>bus station</b>	<i>durolha</i>

<b>doctor</b>	<i>lukman</i>
<b>friend</b>	<i>dost</i>
<b>hospital</b>	<i>keselkhana</i>
<b>hotel</b>	<i>mikmankhana</i>
<b>police</b>	<i>militsia</i>
<b>restaurant</b>	<i>restoran</i>
<b>toilet</b>	<i>hajat'hana</i>
<b>train station</b>	<i>vokzal</i>

<b>bad</b>	<i>ervet</i>
<b>boiled water</b>	<i>gaina d'lan su</i>
<b>bread</b>	<i>churek</i>
<b>expensive</b>	<i>gummut</i>
<b>good</b>	<i>yakshsheh</i>
<b>meat</b>	<i>et</i>
<b>rice</b>	<i>tui</i>
<b>tea</b>	<i>chay</i>

<b>Monday</b>	<i>dushanbe</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>seshenbe</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>charshanbe</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>penshenbe</i>
<b>Friday</b>	<i>anna</i>
<b>Saturday</b>	<i>shenbe</i>
<b>Sunday</b>	<i>yekshanbe</i>

1	<i>bir</i>
2	<i>ikeh</i>
3	<i>uch</i>
4	<i>durt</i>
5	<i>besht</i>
6	<i>alty</i>
7	<i>yed</i>
8	<i>sekiz</i>
9	<i>dokuz</i>
10	<i>on</i>
100	<i>yuz</i>
1000	<i>mun</i>

## UZBEK

Uzbekistan's three major languages are Uzbek, Russian and Tajik. Uzbek is the country's official language and, with 15 million speakers, it is the most widely spoken of the non-Slavic languages of all the former Soviet states. It belongs to the Turkic language family.

Uzbek was written in Roman letters from 1918 to 1941. Since then it has used a modified Cyrillic alphabet, but the country is now moving to a Roman alphabet. While the majority of signs are now in Uzbek Latin, there is still sufficient evidence of Cyrillic (including in menus) to make familiarity with it a good idea (see p482 and p484).

## Uzbek Basics

<b>Peace be with you.</b>	<i>salom alaykhum</i>
<b>And peace with you.</b>	<i>tinch berling</i>
(response)	
<b>Hello.</b>	<i>salom</i>
<b>Goodbye.</b>	<i>hayr</i>
<b>Thank you.</b>	<i>rakhmat</i>
<b>Yes/No.</b>	<i>kha/yuk</i>
<b>How are you?</b>	<i>qanday siz?</i>
<b>Do you speak English?</b>	<i>inglizcha bila sizmi?</i>
<b>Where is ...?</b>	<i>... qayerda?</i>
<b>How much?</b>	<i>qancha/nichpul?</i>

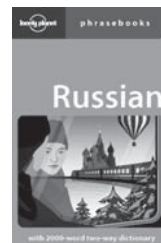
<b>airport</b>	<i>tayyorgokh</i>
<b>bus station</b>	<i>avtobeket</i>
<b>doctor</b>	<i>tabib</i>
<b>friend</b>	<i>urmoq/doost</i>
<b>hospital</b>	<i>kasalhona</i>
<b>hotel</b>	<i>mehmon'hona</i>
<b>police</b>	<i>militsia</i>
<b>restaurant</b>	<i>restoran</i>
<b>toilet</b>	<i>hojat'hona</i>
<b>train station</b>	<i>temir yul vokzali</i>

<b>bad</b>	<i>yomon</i>
<b>boiled water</b>	<i>qaynatilgan suv</i>

<b>bread</b>	<i>non</i>
<b>expensive</b>	<i>qimmat</i>
<b>good</b>	<i>yakshshi</i>
<b>meat</b>	<i>gusht</i>
<b>rice</b>	<i>guruch</i>
<b>tea</b>	<i>choy</i>

<b>Monday</b>	<i>dushanba</i>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<i>seyshanba</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<i>chorshanba</i>
<b>Thursday</b>	<i>payshanba</i>
<b>Friday</b>	<i>juma</i>
<b>Saturday</b>	<i>shanba</i>
<b>Sunday</b>	<i>yakshanba</i>

1	<i>bir</i>
2	<i>ikki</i>
3	<i>uch</i>
4	<i>turt</i>
5	<i>besht</i>
6	<i>olti</i>
7	<i>etti</i>
8	<i>sakkiz</i>
9	<i>tuqqiz</i>
10	<i>un</i>
11	<i>un bir</i>
100	<i>yuz</i>
1000	<i>ming</i>



Also available from Lonely Planet:  
Russian Phrasebook and Central Asia Phrasebook

# Glossary

## ABBREVIATIONS

This glossary contains Arabic (A), Kazakh (Kaz), Kyrgyz (Kyr), Russian (R), Tajik (Taj), general Turkic (T), Turkmen (Tur), Uzbek (U) and English terms you may come across in Central Asia.

**-abad** (T) – suffix meaning ‘town of’  
**aiwan** – covered portico or vaulted portal  
**ak** (T) – white  
**ak kalpak** (Kyr) – felt hat worn by Kyrgyz men  
**akimat** (T) – regional government office or city hall, also *aqimat*  
**aksakal** (T) – revered elder  
**akyn** (Kyr) – minstrel, bard  
**ala-kiyiz** (Kyr) – felt rug with coloured panels pressed on  
**alanghy** (Kaz) – square  
**alplager** (R) – mountaineers camp, short for *alpinistskiy lager*  
**apparatchik** (R) – bureaucrat  
**apteka** (R) – pharmacy  
**arashan** (T) – springs  
**arenda** (R) – literally ‘lease’ or ‘rent’, usually referring to buses that make a trip only if there are enough passengers  
**asalam aleykum** (A) – traditional Muslim greeting, meaning ‘peace be with you’  
**ASSR** – Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic  
**aul** (T) – yurt or herders’ camp  
**aviakassa** (T) – air ticket office  
**avtobus** (R) – bus  
**avtostantsia** (R) – bus stop or bus stand  
**azan** (A) – Muslim call to prayer

**babushka** (R) – old woman; headscarf worn by Russian peasant women  
**balbal** (T) – totemlike stone marker  
**banya** (R) – public bath  
**basmachi** (R) – literally ‘bandits’; Muslim guerrilla fighters who resisted the Bolshevik takeover in Central Asia  
**batyr** (Kyr & Kaz) – warrior hero in epics  
**beg** (T) – landlord, gentleman; also spelt *bay* or *bek*  
**berkutchi** (Kyr) – eagle hunter  
**beshbarmak** (Kaz & Kyr) – flat noodles with lamb, horse meat or vegetable broth (served separately)  
**Bi** (Kaz) – honorific Kazakh title given to clan elders  
**bishkek** (Kaz & Kyrg) – see *pishpek*  
**bosuy** (Kyr) – see *yurt*  
**bufet** (R) – snack bar selling cheap cold meats, boiled eggs, salads, breads, pastries etc

**bulvar** (R) – boulevard  
**bulvary** (Kyr) – boulevard  
**buzkashi** (T) – traditional pololike game played with a headless goat carcass (*buz*)

**caravanserai** – travellers inn  
**chabana** (Kyr & Kaz) – cowboy  
**chaikhana** (T) – teahouse  
**chapan** (U/Taj) – traditional Uzbek/Tajik cloak  
**chay** (T) – tea  
**chaykhana** (T) – see *chaikhana*  
**chong** (T) – big  
**chorsu** (T) – market arcade  
**choy** (U & Taj) – see *chay*  
**choyhona** (T) – see *chaikhana*  
**chuchuk** (Kaz) – see *kazy*  
**chuchvara** (T) – dumplings  
**CIS** – Commonwealth of Independent States; the loose political and economic alliance of most former member republics of the USSR (except the Baltic states); sometimes called *NIS*, for Newly Independent States  
**CPK** – Communist Party of Kazakhstan

**dacha** (R) – a holiday bungalow  
**dangghyly** (Kaz) – avenue  
**darikhana** (Kaz) – pharmacy  
**darya** (T) – river  
**dastarkhan** (T) – literally ‘tablecloth’; feast  
**depe** (Tur) – see *tepe*  
**dezhurnaya** (R) – floor-lady; the woman attendant on duty on each floor of a Soviet-style hotel  
**dom** (R) – building  
**dom odykha** (R) – rest home  
**dopy** (U) – black, four-sided skullcap embroidered in white and worn by men; also *dopi*, *doppe* or *doppilar*  
**dutar** (T) – two-stringed guitar

**eshon (A)** – *Sufi* leader, also spelt *ishan*

**GAI** (R) – traffic police  
**gastronom** (R) – state food shop  
**geoglyph** – geometric pattern of stones, often used in astronomical observations  
**ghanch** (T) – carved and painted plaster  
**gillam** (T) – carpet  
**glasnost** (R) – ‘openness’ in government that was one aspect of the Gorbachev reforms  
**gorod** (R) – town  
**Great Game** – the geopolitical ‘Cold War’ of territorial expansion between the Russian and British empires in the 19th and early 20th centuries in Central Asia

**Hadith** (A) – collected acts and sayings of the Prophet Mohammed  
**haj** (A) – the pilgrimage to Mecca, one of the five pillars of Islam, to be made by devout Muslims at least once during their lifetime  
**hakimyat** (Kyr) – municipal administration building  
**hammam** (A) – bathhouse  
**hammomi** (U) – baths  
**hanako** (U) – see *khanaka*  
**hauz** (T) – an artificial pool  
**hazrat** (A) – honorific title meaning ‘majesty’ or ‘holy’  
**Hejira** (A) – flight of the Prophet Mohammed and his followers to Medina in AD 622  
**hoja** (U) – lord, master, gentleman (honourific title)

**ikat** (U) – tie-dyed silk  
**IMU** – Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan  
**IRP** – Islamic Renaissance Party; grouping of radical activists dedicated to the formation of Islamic rule in Central Asia  
**Ismaili** (A) – a branch of *Shiite* Islam  
**iwan** – see *aiwan*

**jailoo** (Kyr) – summer pasture  
**jami masjid** (A) – Friday mosque  
**jamoat khana** (Taj) – Ismaili prayer hall and meeting hall  
**jihad** (A) – holy war  
**jumi** (U) – Friday, see *jami masjid*

**kala** (T) – fortress  
**kalon** (Taj) – great  
**kara** (T) – black  
**kassa** (R) – cashier or ticket office  
**kazan** (T) – large cauldron used to cook *plow*  
**kazy** (Kaz) – horse-meat sausage  
**-kent** (T) – suffix meaning ‘town of’  
**khanaka** (A) – a *Sufi* contemplation hall and hostel for wandering ascetics; the room of an *eshon* in which he and other *Sufis* perform their *zikr*  
**khanatlas** (U) – see *ikat*  
**kino** (R) – cinema; also kinoteatr  
**kochasi** (U) – street  
**köchösü** (Kyr) – street  
**kökör** (T) – *kumys* shaker  
**kökpar** (Kaz) – see *buzkashi*  
**kok** (T) – blue  
**kolkhoz** (R) – collective farm  
**köshesi** (Kaz & Karakalpak) – street  
**koshk** (U & Tur) – fortress  
**koshma** (Kaz) – multicoloured felt mats  
**kozha** (Kaz) – see *hoja*  
**kumys** (Kaz & Kyr) – fermented mare’s milk  
**kupeyny** (R) – 2nd-class or sleeping carriage on trains; also *kupe*  
**kupkari** (U) – see *buzkashi*

**kurgan** (T) – burial mound  
**kurort** (R) – thermal-spring complex  
**kurpacha** (U) – colourful sitting mattress for a *tapchan*  
**kvartal** (R) – district  
**kymys** (Kyr) – see *kumys*  
**kyzyl** (T) – red  
**kyz-kumay** (Kyr) – traditional game in which a man chases a woman on horseback and tries to kiss her  
**kyz-kuu** (Kaz) – see *kyz-kumay*

**laghman** (T) – noodles  
**LOI** – letter of invitation  
**lux** (R) – deluxe, though often a euphemism

**mahalla** (U) – urban neighbourhood  
**Manas** (Kyr) – epic; legendary hero revered by the Kyrgyz  
**manaschi** (Kyr) – type of *akyn* who recites from the Kyrgyz cycle of oral legends  
**manty** (T) – small stuffed dumplings  
**marshrutka** (R & T) – short term for *marshrutnoe* and *marshrutnyy avtobus*  
**marshrutnoe** (R & T) – small bus or van that follows a fixed route but stops on demand to take on or let off passengers, with fares depending on distance travelled  
**marshrutnyy avtobus** (R & T) – large bus that follows a fixed route but stops on demand to take on or let off passengers, with fares depending on distance travelled  
**maydoni** (U) – public square  
**mazar** (T) – tomb or mausoleum  
**medressa** (A) – Islamic academy or seminary  
**mihrab** (A) – niche in a mosque marking the direction of Mecca  
**mikrorayon** (R) – micro region  
**militsia** (R & T) – police  
**minor** (T) – minaret  
**MSDSP** – Mountain Societies Development Support Project  
**muezzin** (A) – man who calls the Muslim faithful to prayer  
**mufti** (A) – Islamic legal expert or spiritual leader  
**mujaheddin** (A) – Muslim freedom fighter engaged in *jihad*  
**mullah** (A) – Islamic cleric

**nan** (T) – flat bread  
**Naqshband** – the most influential of many *Sufi* secret associations in Central Asia  
**Navrus** (A) – literally ‘New Days’; the main Islamic spring festival; has various regional transliterations (Nauroz, Nauruz, Nawruz, Norruz or Novruz)  
**non** (U & Taj) – see *nan*

**oblast** (R) – province, region  
**oblys** (Kaz) – province, region  
**OVIR** (R) – Otdel Vis i Registratsii; Office of Visas and Registration

**pakhta** (T) – cotton  
**pakhtakor** (T) – cotton worker  
**panjara** (T) – trellis of wood, stone or *ghanch*  
**perestroika** (R) – literally ‘restructuring’; Gorbachev’s efforts to revive the economy  
**piala** (T) – bowl  
**pishpek** (Kaz & Kyr) – churn for making *kumys*  
**pishtak** – monumental entrance portal  
**platskartny** (R) – hard sleeper train  
**ploshchad** (R) – square  
**plov** (T) – a rice dish with meat, carrots or other additions (traditionally prepared by men for special celebrations), also known as *pilau*  
**pochta** (R) – post office  
**pol-lux** (R) – semideluxe  
**polyclinic** – health centre  
**propusk** (R) – military border permit  
**prospekt** (R & T) – avenue

**qala** (U) – see *kala*  
**qymyz** (Kaz) – see *kumys*  
**qyz-quu** (Kaz) – see *kyz-kumay*

**rabab** (T) – six-stringed mandolin, also *rubab*  
**rabad** (T) – suburb  
**rabat** (T) – caravanserai  
**rayon** (R) – district

**samovar** (R) – urn used for heating water for tea, often found on trains  
**samsa** (T) – *samosa*  
**sary** (T) – yellow  
**şayoli** (Tur) – see *kumys*  
**sharq** (Taj & U) – east  
**shashlyk** (T) – meat roasted on skewers over hot coals  
**shay** (Kaz) – see *chay*  
**shaykhana** (T) – see *chaikhana*  
**Shiite** (A) – one of the two main branches of Islam  
**shubat** (Kaz & Taj) – fermented camel’s milk  
**shyrdak** (Kyr) – felt rug with appliquéd coloured panels  
**skibaza** (R) – ski base  
**SLLPCP** – Sustainable Livelihoods for Livestock Producing Communities Project  
**SSR** – Soviet Socialist Republic

**stolovaya** (R) – canteen, cafeteria  
**Sufi** (A) – mystical tradition in Islam  
**suzani** (U) – bright silk embroidery on cotton cloth

**tapchan** (Taj) – tea bed  
**tash** (T) – stone  
**tebbetey** (Kyr) – round fur-trimmed hat worn by men  
**telpek** (Tur & U) – sheepskin hat worn by men  
**tepe** (T) – fort or fortified hill, also *depe*  
**tim** (T) – shopping arcade  
**toi** (T) – celebration  
**Transoxiana** – meaning ‘the land beyond the Oxus’; historical term for the region between the Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya rivers  
**TsUM** (R) – *Tsentralny universalny magazin*; central department store  
**turbaza** (R) – holiday camp typically with Spartan cabins, plain food, sports, video hall and bar, usually open only in summer  
**Turkestan** – literally ‘the Land of the Turks’; covers Central Asia and Xinjiang (China)

**UAZ** (R) – Russian jeep  
**ulak-tartysh** (Kyr) – see *buzkashi*  
**ulama** (A) – class of religious scholars or intellectuals  
**ulitsa** (R) – street  
**umuvalnik** (R) – portable washing basin  
**univermag** (R) – universalny magazin; department store  
**uulu** (Kyr) – meaning ‘son of’

**viloyat** (U) – province  
**vodopad** (R) – waterfall  
**voksal** (R) – train station

**ylag oyyyny** (Karakalpak) – see *buzkashi*  
**yurt** – traditional nomadic ‘house’, a collapsible cylindrical wood framework covered with felt

**zakaznik** (R) – protected area  
**zapovednik** (R) – nature reserve  
**zhyostky** (R) – hard carriage on trains  
**zikr** (A) – recitation or contemplation of the names of God; recitation of sacred writings; one part of traditional *Sufi* practice

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